

Remarks on Arrival at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida
March 12, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. General Ryan, thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank your base commander. I want to thank the command sergeant who greeted me at the stairs of the Air Force plane that flew me here. The good news is, those pilots know what they're doing.

It is such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth. I'm proud of the men and women who wear our uniform. My job is to set a clear mission for the United States military. The mission of the military would be to be well prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Today I'm going to speak to a Rotary Club and chamber of commerce event that will detail parts of my budget that I submitted to the Congress. One part of my budget that I submitted to the Congress will be to make sure we house our military folks better. One part of the budget I sub-

mitted to Congress is a pay raise for those who wear the uniform. I believe by focusing our mission, we can improve morale. But I know by paying folks more, we can improve morale, as well.

I look forward to shaking your hands and looking you in the eye and thanking you for serving America. For those of you who I don't get to look in the eye and say, "Thanks for serving America," thanks for serving America. We're counting on you. Our Nation relies upon you to keep the peace, and we will do so.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. on the tarmac. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff; and Brig. Gen. William F. Hodgkins, USAF, commander, and M. Sgt. Karl W. Meyers, USAF, commander chief, 325th Fighter Wing.

Remarks During a Tour of Base Housing and an Exchange With Reporters
at Tyndall Air Force Base
March 12, 2001

The President. Donnie, thanks for having us—me, my brother, and about 400 other people in your living room.

Senior Airman Donnie Bryant. I think this is the most I've ever had in my living room, sir.

The President. Well, there are some fine Americans in your living room.

Airman Bryant. Yes, sir.

The President. Thanks for having us.

Airman Bryant. Yes, sir.

The President. So, tell us about housing here.

Airman Bryant. Housing—we just recently have completed our Redfish Point housing, which is the housing right behind my house over here, the new housing. I think you may get a chance to drive by and see it.

The President. Right, we are.

Airman Bryant. This is the older housing. It's about 50 years old, built to the standards at the time. And these houses are totally being refurbished. We have kitchens being redone in them. The electric and all the plumbing and stuff, some of